

March, 1983
No. 83



What's Inside?

Election Dinner (see back cover)
Landmarking the Cliffs
Northeast Waterfront District
Pfeiffer Street Park

TELEGRAPH HILL SEMAPHORE

Publication of the Telegraph Hill Dwellers

Slate of Officers

Your nominating committee, consisting of Lynne Burwell, Anne Halsted, Greg Jones, Herb Kosovitz, and Judy Robinson is pleased to present the following slate of officers and directors for your consideration on April 4th:

OFFICERS:

President	Jane Winslow	433-3700	396 Lombard	398-2481
Vice President	Judy Robinson		562B Lombard	392-9167
Recording Secretary	Nan Roth.	622-5085	2017 Grant	421-1466
Corresponding Secretary	Jeanne Milligan	434-1122	486 Union	982-8533
Treasurer	Herb Zelinsky		152 Lombard	397-2176
Financial Secretary	Rhoda Robinson		276 Francisco	989-0494
Historian	Nancy Katz		2 Whiting	982-0269
Editor— <i>Semaphore</i>	Lynne Burwell		321 Chestnut	781-5221
				986-1890
				982-9715

DIRECTORS, 1983-1985:

Bob Armstrong	462 Vallejo	391-4178
Jerry Lubenow	300 Lombard	981-8279
Bob Tibbits	386 Chestnut	986-7227
Jack Moss	265 Telegraph Hill	781-4077

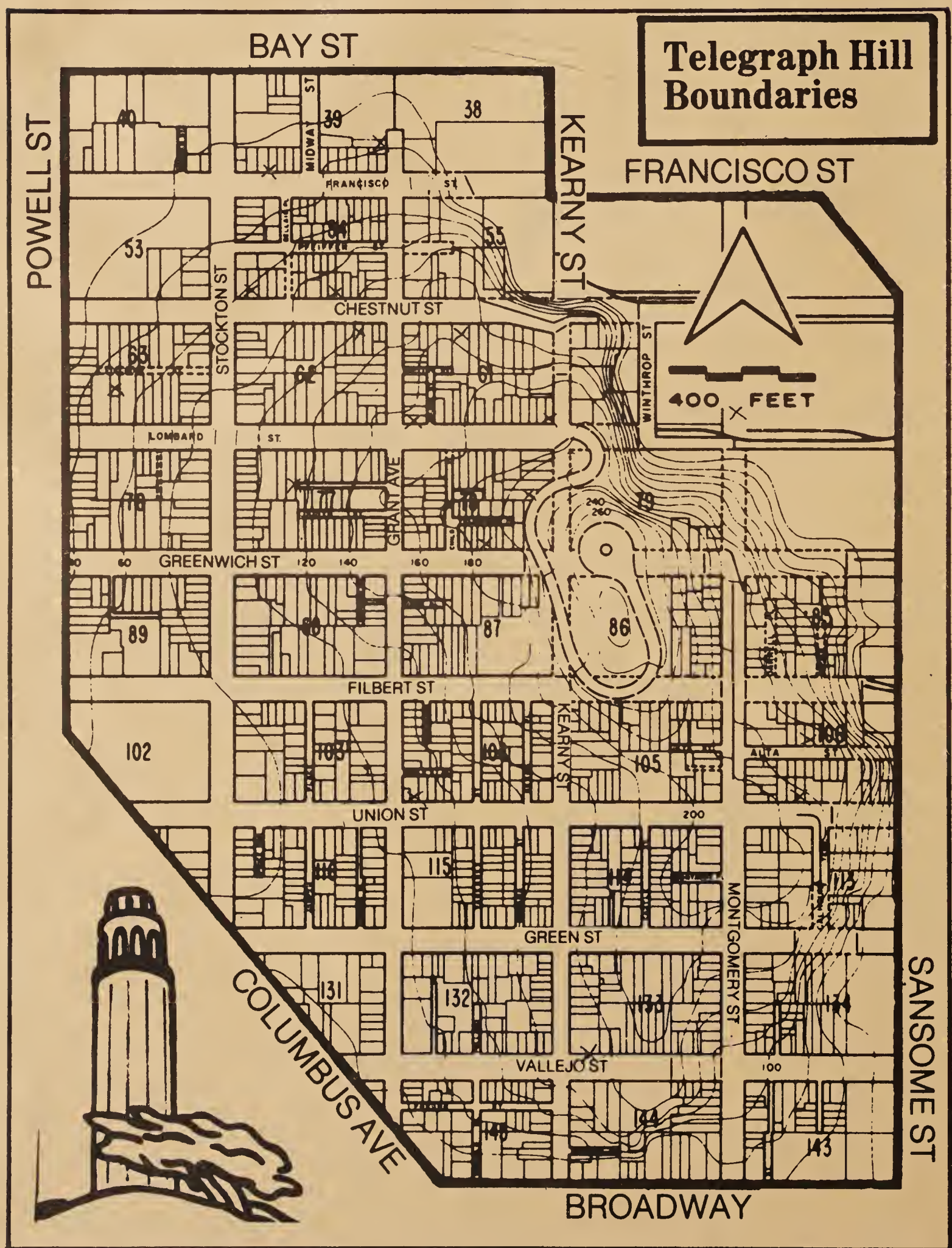
DIRECTORS remaining on the Board, 1983-1984:

Greg Jones	58 Edgardo Place	986-6412
Herb Kosovitz.	340 Chestnut	398-0757
Virginia Sletteland.	448 Greenwich	781-4352
Lee Englund.	27 Alta	362-3891
Ex Officio Jerry Petruzzelli	288 Union	397-6043

DAN DUPORE
TOM HAVEY

397-9148
391-5524

SLATE NOMINEES' RESIDENCES ARE MARKED WITH AN 'X':



THE BEAT GOES ON: 725 GREENWICH

We were surprised and dismayed to learn from Bob Passmore on January 27th that a S.F. Superior Court decision has allowed Harry Som, the owner of 725 Greenwich to proceed with his proposal for a new office building on that site, *despite* the moratorium in effect. The Planning Department was represented in court by the City Attorney's office—most ineffectively, we believe—and we were *not* notified of the proceedings. We are studying the documents to determine whether or not an appeal is possible.

SOUTH BEACH MARINA PROGRESSING

The redevelopment housing and open space project south of the Bay Bridge is progressing. Its first increment, a park and 700-boat marina between Pier 40 and China Basin, is scheduled to begin this year. THD is represented on the Citizens Advisory Committee working on the entire redevelopment project from Rincon Point to China Basin.

ANNUAL ELECTION DINNER

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E. DE MARTINI

Edmund (Tack) De Martini, a THD founding member, died suddenly of a heart attack on Saturday, January 29th, 1983. Tack was a quiet friend—always there to help others. The De Martini brothers have staunchly supported the Dwellers with continuous ads in our *Semaphore*, and their generous help on such projects as the Carnivale Cheese-Rolling Contest in Washington Square to raise money for the park. At other times they have loaned their truck to be used as a sound truck, or to haul palm-fonds, chains, and anchors for our Shipwreck Party. On a more serious note, Tack served as a THD director from 1962-64 and 1970-72. He later worked on the residential rezoning for Telegraph Hill, which became part of the S.F. rezoning plan. Tack gave generously of his time and talent to benefit North Beach and Telegraph Hill. Contributions in his memory may be made to the Family Survival Project, 1736 Divisadero, San Francisco, CA 94115.

PIER 39 UPDATE

The new management is applying to BCDC to replace the sad floating-tire breakwater of their marina with a solid, permanent breakwater. At the same time, Pier 39 is applying for an extension of the eastern park towards Pier 35. Both projects are welcome improvements, provided the new breakwater is built as low as practicable and without railing, so that the Bay will remain visible from the Embarcadero level.

**NEW HELIPORT
SOUTH OF CHINA BASIN**

Last November, the Port Commission approved the principle of a private heliport for AIR EXEC south of China Basin. The

concept calls for a lease with specific, enforceable guidelines for the heliport's users. Limited air corridors are to be approved by City Planning with effective citizens' input to determine their location. Sightseeing, the most disturbing aspect of present helicopter operations, is to be specifically excluded over the City and County of San Francisco (i.e., over the city and large portions of the adjoining Bay). Russian Hill and Telegraph Hill residents are actively participating in the negotiations. They have asked for a "focussed EIR" concerning types of helicopters, noise levels, frequency of operations, proposed flight corridors, and specific controls for enforcement.

SEMAPHORE STAFF

Editor:

Lynne Burwell

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Ad Staff:

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Kathleen Cannon
Angie Fray
Joe Gans
Sally Hartzell
Suzanne Keebler
Jim Love
Martin O'Malley
Mia Morrill

Contributors:

Maggie Baylis
Margaret Gwathmey
Anne Halsted
Bob Katz
Nancy Katz
Herb Kosovitz
David Myrick
Mary Risley
Judy Robinson

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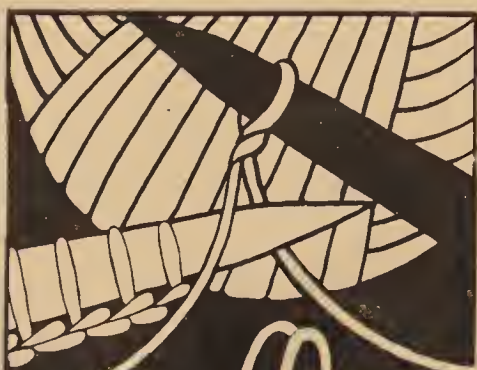
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CRITICAL ISSUES FOR NORTH BEACH

The following are excerpts from a letter to the City Planning Department following a meeting between city officials and THD President Jerry Petruzzelli, Anne Halsted, and Herb Kosovitz. The issues addressed are among the most critical facing residents of our neighborhood.

Dear Mr. Macris and Mr. Passmore:

This is to summarize our discussion of February 7, 1983 and the action to which all present agreed.

The general concerns presented were as follows:

a. We are anxious to establish permanent zoning in the North Beach neighborhood commercial district which will encourage the retention and development of residential and residential-serving commercial uses, particularly because of the observable growth from downtown of offices and other residential-displacing uses in our neighborhood.

b. Two critical elements that we have pursued are the RC zoning and 40 foot-height limit. The status of both is temporary and unclear, and must be resolved at the latest by April of 1984. The process to accomplish this is long and complex; it must begin now rather than be delayed in hopes of a simpler solution.

c. The intrusion of financial institutions (five on one corner) is an issue that must be addressed by permanent and comprehensive legislation rather than the current moratorium.

d. Enforcement of the provisions of the Planning Code continues to be a problem to us, with Planning Department oversights and errors resulting in the need for constant nagging, watchdogging, and legal ac-

tion on our part. This is expensive and disruptive to all of us.

e. The City Attorney's office appears unable to defend the City's interests adequately or objectively in the areas of City Planning and this results in unlawful actions from the view of zoning requirements.

We agreed that:

1. Mr. Passmore would advise us in writing of the status of the Environmental Evaluation of the RC zoning and the 40 foot-height limit.

2. We will write to the City Planning Commission, with copies to the Board of Supervisors, as to the dangerous expediency of proposed changes in the zoning code regarding conditional use and neighborhood-initiated zoning changes. [The burden of proof must remain with the developer who seeks to exceed the standards set by the zoning code.]

3. We will by letter to George Agnost and the Mayor support your request for a full-time attorney to be assigned and report to the City Planning Department.

4. With regard to the Som building at 725 Greenwich Street, Mr. Passmore will advise us of the court case number and initiate a permit search to determine whether or not a permit has been issued. [A local civil court overturned city disapproval of the project. The Dwellers were not informed of the court hearing, and thus were unable to support the city position.]

5. Mr. Passmore will issue a written statement that the City Planning initiated rezoning of May, 1982 for the North Beach commercial district (C-2 to RC-4) will extend to May of 1984. He will also confirm that public hearings on the two neighborhood initiated rezonings (RC and 40 foot-height limit), as well as on the restrictions on

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financial institutions will be held in July or August, 1983, and thus will be heard by the Board of Supervisors in September or October, 1983.

6. We will write a letter to the City Planning Commission asking for discretionary review of 431 Columbus, a proposed site for a national financial institution, which would displace the U.S. Restaurant.

7. We affirm our verbal request that North Beach be included as one of the first group of Special Use Areas under the Neighborhood Commercial District plan.

8. We have sent Mr. Passmore a copy of our letter on the applicability of landmark status to the cliffs of Telegraph Hill.

9. We affirm our oral request that any construction over the 40 foot-height limit such as windscreens and the like not be allowed to evade the Planning Code requirements by easy conversion (with or without permit) into a permanent structure.

If you disagree with our notes or have new opinions, please advise me by March 4.

Best Regards,
Anne Halsted

RIP VAN WINKLE & PIER 43 HELIPORT

Last September, the Environmental Review Section of the Planning Department initiated a study to determine whether an EIR is required for an authorization to continue sightseeing helicopter services on Pier 43. As of February 83, the data requested of the operator had not been forthcoming. It is high time for Environmental Review to take the steps to obtain conformance with their request or draw the necessary legal consequences.

HOME SECURITY

- Always keep your doors locked.
- Use deadbolt locks on all outside doors.
- Use nails on the sides of window frames in the event your windows do not lock.
- Lay a stick or broom handle on the tracks of sliding glass doors and windows.
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 1. Make sure the safety chain is attached before opening.
 2. Ask the visitor to identify himself.
- Mail and newspapers piling up when you are on a trip will tip off burglars. Have your neighbors pick up your mail and papers, including throw-aways.
- Mark valuable possessions with your ID or license number.

The above information was supplied by Art Agnos's office.

THD WELCOMES NEW AND REINSTATED MEMBERS

Robert E. Armstrong ✓
John W. Borden ✓
Aka Borosky ✓
Patricia & Ted Brown ✓
Wayne Buford ✓
Jean F. Carlisle ✓
Ross Carron ✓
Joan Crowley ✓
France Damon ✓
Ray & JoAnn Dunaway ✓
James T. Ferguson ✓
Margaret & Joe Gans ✓
Marc Hinshaw ✓
Susan & Bob Katz ✓
John L. Driken ✓
Richard F. Losey ✓
Gary P. Lukas ✓
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FIRST HURDLE PASSED IN LANDMARKING CLIFFS

—by Margaret Gwathmey

In the Fall of 1982 several hill residents combined forces to propose that the steep cliffs all along the East side be declared a city landmark. This would protect them from defacement as well as promote recognition of their value as part of the charm of the city. The enthusiastic cliffhangers, joined by environmental groups, persuaded the Landmarks Advisory Board on December 1 to recommend 4 to 3 that the cliffs be so designated.

Maps and detailed research were prepared and presented by Nan Roth (397-2176) with an extensive historical display by Neil Malloch. Coordination and strategy were spearheaded by Grace de Laet, with many

supporting arrangements prior to the hearing by Toby Bloxam and Nan. Over 50 letters were received by the Board in favor of the project, and at least 40 residents, representatives of groups such as Friends of the Earth and the Sierra Club, and experts spoke at the hearing.

The Board's two major problems were conceptualizing land as a landmark instead of the usual building and doubt as to whether so many properties could legally be combined into a single landmark. Robert Passmore, the Zoning Administrator, opines that under Article 10 of the City Planning Code, the cliffs do not qualify as a landmark. The City Attorney must now rule on this. If he rules in favor, the project will next be heard by the Planning Commission. For this hearing, a professional metes and bounds survey will have to be made. The

Dwellers Board has committed itself to this phase of the approval process.

Highrise Threats

The height limit all along the base of the cliffs is 84 feet, like the Icehouse. If this is measured from the average altitude of a sloping lot, the top of the building is much higher than 84 feet from Sansome. Two highrise projects west of Sansome at the foot of Green are currently threatening to blot out the cliffs there: 1045 Sansome and 1171 Sansome.

On March 2, the Landmarks Board decided to review 1045 Sansome only after the Office of Environmental Review rules on the EIR. Sixteen concerned neighbors came to a February hearing, but the owner did not. The building is rumored to be 7 stories and involves conversion for the cliff part of the property from residential zoning to commercial, waiver of the 40-foot height limit there, and elimination of the present parking. The property is in Parking Area A.

The architects, Tai Associates, for 1171 Sansome submitted drawings a year ago showing a thirteen-story building. Subsequently a bulldozer has been seen hacking away at the bottom of the cliff on that property, which goes through to Calhoun. Eighty years ago dynamite brought down great sections of the hill east of there; now bulldozers have been invented.

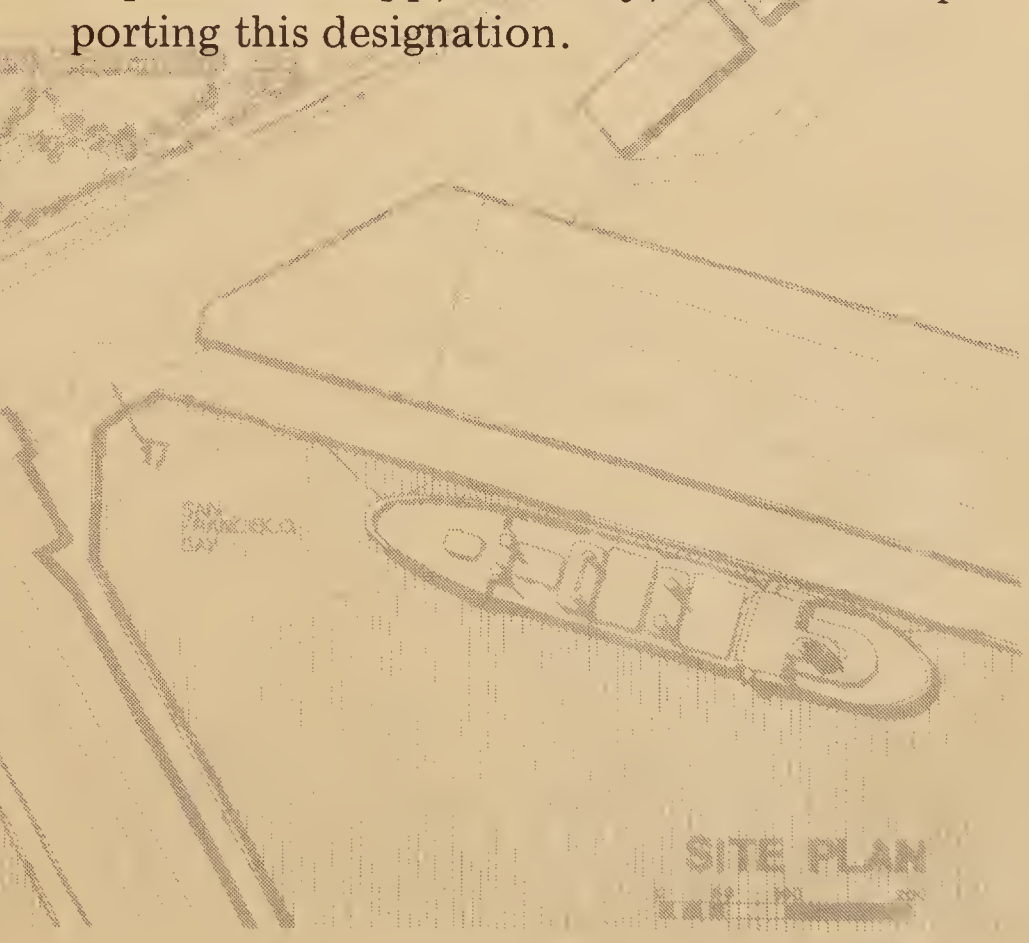
Both projects require EIRs, as well as Landmarks Board approval. Neighboring property owners and longtime renters are watchdogging these developments, but need more participants because not everyone can attend every hearing. *Note:* A year ago a similarly large 7-story building was planned for 1025 Sansome by the same owner. See the April 1982 *Semaphone* for details.

NORTHEAST WATERFRONT HISTORIC DISTRICT

Like Jackson Square, the flatlands east of the hill still have wonderful old buildings. From Broadway to Union and the cliffs to the Embarcadero, every decade of the city's history is represented. This area is not yet infested with developeritis; no huge blocs of derelict property exist.

This area could become a protected historic district if the supervisors approve. The hearing will be March 22 by the Supervisors' Planning, Housing & Development Committee, Quentin Kopp, Chair. For the agenda call the Clerk of the Board.

It is only through this proposal that the Landmarks Board has any control over potential highrises along the cliffs from Union to Broadway, like 1045 and 1171 Sansome. It is therefore essential that this district be declared historic. *You can help.* For a copy of the proposal, call Margaret Gwathmey, 982-4221. By all means write a letter to Supervisors Kopp, Kennedy, and Silver supporting this designation.





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ADDITIONAL PLANNING & ZONING NOTES

In addition to those noted elsewhere in the *Semaphore*, the following projects are being followed by THD:

- 350 Beach Street, Fisherman's Wharf. A 280-space public parking garage is to be replaced by commercial space with 102 parking spaces retained almost exclusively for clients of the building and A. Sabella's restaurant. THD opposed the loss of public parking at the City Planning Commission hearing March 10. The project was expected to be approved with a requirement that 55 spaces be set aside in the evenings and on weekends for public parking.

- 39 Pollard Place, Telegraph Hill. THD opposed the owner's request for rear yard and building height variances, claiming they would substantially violate the zoning code and increase density and height in the block. The City Planning Department has made no decision as of this date.

- 349 Vallejo, Telegraph Hill. A request for a change in zoning to accommodate a commercial recording studio on the residential block below Montgomery was denied by the City Planning Department and subsequently by the Board of Permit Appeals (February 2, 1982). The owner did not seek a rehearing of the denial, although the studio has apparently been constructed on the site without Planning Department approval.

- Levi Plaza, Block G. The Planning Commission approved construction of a new block of the complex below Telegraph Hill. The Dwellers demanded that it be reconsidered as a new application when a previous permit expired, and concerns were voiced about how the building is integrated into the side of the hill. The project would

not block views and was granted variances for open space on roof tops.

- **Bank at Stockton & Green.** THD opposed an application to locate a new bank at the intersection (site of the U.S. Cafe), consistent with THD's support of a moratorium, currently in effect, on new financial institutions in the North Beach area. The regional office of the comptroller of the currency took the matter under advisement in December, and it is still under review. The regional office is expected to make its recommendation to the national office in April. Concerned neighbors should write: Mr. John C. Beers, Regional Director for Corporate Activities, U.S. Comptroller of the Currency, Suite 2101, Stuart Street Tower, 1 Market Plaza, San Francisco, CA 94105.

- **North Beach Playground Lights.** Residents and Dwellers complained to the City Parks & Recreation Department in November, and representatives of the department and the Open Space Advisory Committee viewed the playground lights. No change in the brightness of the lights has taken place, however.

- **407-415 Lombard, Telegraph Hill.** The City Public Works Department, responding to Dwellers' and residents' complaints about illegal construction at the site, said that the building was posted on August 10, 1982, with a warning of violation and instructions that work was not to proceed without permits; work not requiring a permit was allowed to proceed. The department said it would continue to monitor the building for possible violations.

- **Delta King Riverboat Condominiums.** After many people vigorously opposed locating the sternwheeler at Aquatic Park during the last hearing, the National Park

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Service ruled that site out and indicated that if the vessel were to be located on the San Francisco waterfront, it would be more appropriate at the Hyde Street pier.

- 208 Francisco Street, Telegraph Hill. A request for variance to construct a new residential property at the site was brought to the Dwellers' attention for comment. The request is for new second and third floors and use of the rear yard beyond code requirements. (Interested parties should contact Rubin Glickman, owner, 989-0350 for details.)

- 475 Lombard, Telegraph Hill. The Planning Commission approved construction of a seven-unit apartment house on the hill top, with variances and conditions allowing the first two residential levels to extend to the front property line with bay windows extending over it. After meeting with residents and at the urging of the Planning Department staff, the developer agreed to several compromises.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REPORT

MOTIONS PASSED—October 19, 1982

To pay for general membership dinners for the 5 people on the social committee who worked so hard on organizing the picnic.

To support project and set up a committee for a children's park, with Winslow as chairwoman, with income limits not exceeded according to Board's discretion for funding the project.

To contribute \$25 to save the cable cars.

MOTIONS PASSED—November 16, 1982

To approve the social chairwoman to give service tip money to Julius Castle up to \$250.00 in the manner most appropriate.

To send a letter to Telegraph Neighborhood Center expressing concern over changes in medical facilities without informing neighborhood and urging center to provide alternative health care at reasonable cost to neighborhood.

To invite DPW director to speak along with inspector for our area at the next general membership dinner.

MOTIONS PASSED—January 17, 1983

To oppose the development proposed at 1171 Sansome (at base of cliffs) and take appropriate steps for sending letters to Landmarks Board.

To approve the rezoning committee to take the appropriate steps at 1/27/83 hearing to protect THD position on rezoning.

To adopt committee's recommendation on historical district status for the hill.

To reimburse Nan Roth for the \$82 spent on landmarking the cliff.



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To appoint J. Robinson and G. Jones to re-
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MOTIONS PASSED—February 15, 1983

To purchase or accept as gifts a microphone
 for general membership meetings and a tape
 recorder for directors' meetings; maximum
 amount of \$250.

To appoint B. Bullock, J. Petruzzelli (chair),
 R. Robinson, and G. Sletteland to study
 membership goals and policy and report to
 directors and general membership in June,
 1983.

To send a letter to the mayor addressing
 neighborhood development, enforcement,
 and downzoning.

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Press out onto a cookie sheet to a thickness of ¼". Cut into shapes with a cookie cutter or small knife. Remove excess dough. To make holes in shortbread, use a drinking straw.

Bake in a preheated 275° oven until pale and golden, not brown. When cool, tie colored ribbons in the hole.

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TELEGRAPH HILL SHERRY

One of the pleasant memories of the recent past is the special sherry bearing the Telegraph Hill label with a sketch of a distant view of the hill capped by Coit Tower.

In the 1940s and 1950s, C. Schilling and Co. of Madrone, California, offered a pale dry sherry "Specially Selected and Privately Bottled for New Union Grocery." Perhaps some of the green sherry bottles, purchased from Speedy's years ago, stand forgotten in kitchen cabinets or wine cellars around the hill. Some bottles still exist but most of the sherry was pleasurably consumed long ago.



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PERMIT PARKING

Supervisor Ward has proposed that all dwellings within 250 feet of the boundary of a permit zone be allowed to buy permits within that zone. Our "A" area would be seriously impacted on its boundaries, both on Bay Street (North Point Apartments) and Broadway (residence hotels). Make your protests heard to Supervisors Hongisto, Maher, and Molinari.

JAIL NEEDS BOOKS

San Francisco Sheriff Michael Hennessey has announced that the County Jail is very much in need of books for prisoners. Specifically, the department is looking for *quality* books in the following categories: dictionaries (especially pocket dictionaries), thesauruses, fiction, vocabulary improvement and spelling books, biographies, and drawing techniques.

Interested persons with books *in good condition* should call 861-2791.

In addition, *tax deductible* financial contributions for dictionaries and other library materials are strongly encouraged. Donations may be made through *Programs For People*, a non-profit support program affiliated with the San Francisco Sheriff's Department. Those interested in contributing can call 558-2411 for further information.

**PAY YOUR
DUES NOW**

POST OFFICE BOX FOR DWELLERS

At long last, the Dwellers have an official address. We have rented a post office box at the remodelled Stockton Street Post Office. Officers and committee chairpersons may come and go, but Post Office Box 330159, San Francisco, CA 94133 will, we hope, go on forever. This address will appear on THD stationery.

GRANT AVENUE TREES

A committee of concerned Dwellers, headed by Jane Winslow, have been working to organize a tree planting along Grant from Columbus to Filbert. If we can guarantee a minimum of twenty trees, the Friends of the Urban Forest will help to organize and fund the planting. The committee believes that there is enough owner support along the avenue to make the project a success. Parking will not be affected.

Pfeiffer Park



At its February 14th meeting, the committee voted to drop "street" from its official name, and designate the stub-end of Pfeiffer Street "Pfeiffer Park." The committee has approved Anthony M. Guzzardo Associates design for the park, and working drawings will commence. Paul Lettieri, of Guzzardo Associates, working with committee members Maggie Baylis, Jack Early, Nancy Katz, Herb Kosovitz, Rhoda Robinson, and Nan Roth, has developed an informal scheme consisting of a meandering stair at grade, constructed of railroad ties and exposed-aggregate landings leading to a small overlook. Planting will incorporate the trees Jack Early has planted and tended with native trees, shrubs, and groundcover.

DEPARTMENTS

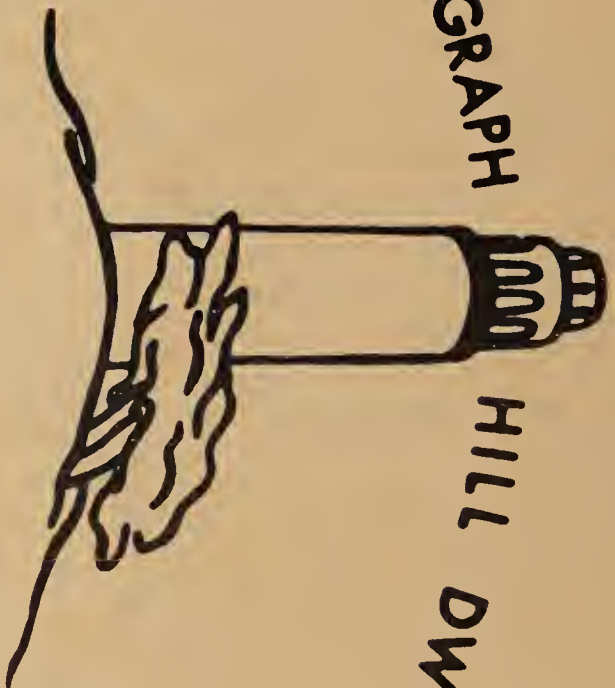


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